



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
Monterey Park, California 91754-2169



August 9, 2013

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**RESPONSE TO THE SAFETY CONCERNS RELATED TO THE USE OF ILLEGAL
FIREWORKS SURROUNDING THE FOURTH OF JULY IN THE
EAST RANCHO DOMINGUEZ COMMUNITY**

On July 9, 2013, the Board requested that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department) report back on the safety concerns related to the use of illegal fireworks surrounding the Fourth of July in the East Rancho Dominguez (ERD) community.

Attached is the Department's response to the concerns raised by Ms. Senetta Farley.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me or Captain Leonard McCray at (310) 605-6561.

Sincerely,

LEROY D. BACA
SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

The purpose of this document is to provide information regarding the enforcement efforts utilized to address the use of illegal fireworks throughout the Compton Sheriff's Station (Station) service area, which includes the community of East Rancho Dominguez (ERD).

The use of illegal fireworks becomes prevalent throughout Los Angeles County (County) usually late in the month of May and continues throughout the end of July. The following reflects the strategies and the enforcement efforts implemented by the Station.

Strategy

The strategy to combat illegal firework activity is three pronged when addressing these types of complaints. The first is to educate the community of the inherent dangers of illegal fireworks and the prosecution and penalties that result from possession, sales, and use of illegal fireworks. The second is to locate, identify, and arrest those responsible for distributing illegal fireworks. The third is to respond to calls for service, identify those using the illegal fireworks, effect confiscation, and ensure prosecution of those responsible.

The Station Community Relations Team (CRT) begins the education effort by disseminating information regarding the dangers of illegal fireworks to community based organizations, neighborhood watch groups, email blasts, flyers, and church gatherings.

The Station Special Assignment Office (SAO) Team leads the enforcement effort by conducting investigations, surveillance, and abatement operations. They specifically target for this activity, commencing in the later part of May through July 5.

The abatement effort focuses on locating and arresting those responsible for supplying the illegal fireworks in local communities. This effort consists of intelligence gathering strategies such as the use of informants to identify suppliers as well as the use of internet based classified listing sites to identify possible vendors. Whether these abatement activities occur in the unincorporated area of the County or a contract city, points of distribution and sales are often widespread and will impact a large geographic area.

Results

Arrests:

During the peak time of illegal firework sales and purchases (May-July 5), the SAO Team initiated four arrests, which resulted in over 500 pounds of illegal fireworks being confiscated.

1. 06/06/13, 0914 hours; 1021 S. Central Ave, Compton

Station SAO and Operation Safe Streets (OSS) deputies conducted a probation search at the listed location. Suspect Jimenez was on active probation and deputies recovered approximately 200 pounds of illegal fireworks and a large bag of marijuana from the location.

2. 06/29/13 2200 hours; 3325 Burton Street, Lynwood

Station OSS and SAO deputies, conducted a search operation at the location. A large cache of illegal fireworks and a shotgun were recovered from the location.

3. 07/04/13, 1135 hours; 225 E. Bennett St, Compton

Station SAO deputies responded to an anonymous informant providing information that illegal fireworks were being sold at this location. Deputies recovered a large cache of illegal fireworks from the location.

4. 07/04/13, 1220 hours; 15507 S. Haskins Ave, Compton

Station SAO deputies and detectives conducted a search operation as part of an illegal firework abatement operation. The deputies contacted an individual advertising the sale of illegal fireworks on Craigslist. The operation resulted in the confiscation of over 100 pounds of illegal fireworks.

Calls for service

From the end of May through July 3, there were 89 calls for service regarding illegal fireworks in the Station service area. On July 4 and 5, 2013, there was one call for service reported to the Station dispatch center regarding illegal fireworks activity in the ERD service area. The call was reported by an anonymous informant who reported two male Hispanics throwing fireworks at passing vehicles in the area of Alondra Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue, ERD at 2151 hours. No offenders were located.

Recommendations

As a result of a review of the 90 calls for service, and the four arrests made from May through July 5, 2013, the Station personnel will continue to utilize the following strategies to enhance the service and response to the ERD Community:

Announcements / Flyer Distribution – CRT deputies will continue to make announcements about reporting fireworks related activities.

Outreach – Volunteers on Patrol will supplement patrol personnel and will also contribute to the education and prevention component of this effort when contacting

members of the community. They will also be utilized to locate and identify offending parties.

Church distributions – Members of the CRT will attend church services to explain how to report calls for service and encourage residents to report calls for service.

Block Club Meetings – CRT deputies will attend block club meetings and stress the importance of reporting illegal fireworks activity. The deputies will perform role playing during this time to ensure all residents are confident with reporting this illegal activity.

Use of Social Media – CRT deputies will use all Department approved social media tools (Nixle, email, web-site, social networks, etc.) and make weekly broadcasts to the members of the community to encourage the reporting of all illegal fireworks activity.

Deployment of the Station Reserve Deputies – Reserve deputies will be utilized to bolster the shift deployment during the most active periods of illegal fireworks use.